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Johann Rush withholdings - Oswald in New Orleans:

(74) An important New Orleans matter not reflected in any NO FO file I've seen is a Not Recorded Serial in 105-82555 and was indicated for filing in another FBIHQ file at the time the memo was written on 11/8/68, 62-109060. This involves me in two different ways, which I'll explain. The withholding is of the public domain and is laughable because the same information is repeatedly disclosed in NO FO files. I made subject copies and can cite two of these many, 89-69-114 and 186. The withholding is of the name Johann Rush.

Throughout this memo Branigan refers to Rush not as the source but as the "informant." This has many meanings, one that many relevant records are withheld. This means FBIHQ, NO and San Francisco, perhaps also the Shreveport office.

It also tends to add meaning to how Johann Rush was at the ITM to make movies of Oswald that later had such great significance and how Oswald had unlisted phones for personnel of the TV station in his address book, as I recall also a connection with an advertising/public relations agency.

What it seems to add up to is that the same Oswald was has long been suspected of having an FBI connection, a matter supposedly investigated by the Commission, just happens to know how to get himself TV coverage and of all things by an FBI informant. This then is withheld by the FBI from the Commission, which was to investigate and report on all, with the FBI as its major investigative arm.

Explanations: whatever the official mythologies, if any, my work in New Orleans included no investigations of Clay Shaw. My interest was Oswald. I considered what I later learned, that it was inevitable for Shaw to have been an FBI and CIA source (if not more). I regard this as proper for one in his position, given the nature of the ITM. Suppose for example that someone had tried to assassinate Somoza when he came to N.O.? The ITM also was a first-rate source of important and legitimate commercial and industrial intelligence.

Having no means I stayed where I could. I've told you about Matt Herron. There was also a college lit. professor, also a political informant for the FBI, named John [redacted] Joerg. I knew he was an informant when I used his hideaway, not his home. It was on Robertson Street, uptown N.O. (No records provided from N.O. FO files although Commission records leave without doubt he is in them.) I also stayed on Jackson Avenue with a Mrs.

(74)

Mr. W. C. Sullivan November 8, 1968

Mr. W. A. Branigan

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
NOVEMBER 22, 1963
DALLAS, TEXAS

On November 8, 1968, Supervisor Glenn Harter of the San Francisco Office called. He advised that [redacted] while in the New Orleans area, had taken some movie film of Lee Harvey Oswald passing out leaflets for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. The informant's father, who resides in New Orleans, was contacted by two male individuals who represented themselves as being with the International World Trade Center and who said they were interested in contacting the informant in order to obtain the film he had for District Attorney James Garrison. According to Harter, the informant was inclined to make this film available to Garrison, but was first checking with the Bureau.

Harter was instructed to advise the informant that it was solely his decision whether he made the film available to Garrison or not and that the Bureau could not counsel him. Harter stated that if the informant complied with the request, he would furnish a copy of the film he had to Garrison and would retain the original film.

It was pointed out to Harter that the informant had originally taken this film in behalf of television station WSDU in New Orleans and that the informant might want to consider whether the station had any proprietary right in the film. It will be noted that the prints from the film have appeared in the Warren Commission Report and, therefore, the pictures are in the public realm.

ACTION:
For information.

62-109060

WAB:lag
(7)

1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Branigan
1 - Mr. Rozamus
1 - Mr. Lonihan
1 - 134-17762
1 - 105-82555 (Oswald)

105-82555-
NOT RECORDED
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Marge Kirkpatrick, whose son Godfrey had managed to escape an insane assylum with a weapon owned by a doctor and with the intent of Killing Garrison. (Instead he assaulted his mother and was captured and placed in a maximum security institution at Jackson, where I interviewed him 7/4/68 or 69.) The last of Godfrey's voluntary hospitalizations followed his having been in touch with Washington officials, claiming assassination knowledge. (No records of this provided.) When he was hospitalized a CIA phone number and name were found in his pocket. I have a copy of this and many other records, provided by the mother but not included in or referred to in any records provided from any files by any agency. It is my recollection that these records include the numbers called in Washington.

There are provocative elements of mystery in all of this. For example, the narcfink I've referred to, Dione Turner, knew all about the Kirkpatrick home, ~~even~~ even prior furniture arrangement, ~~and~~ about tenants and their personal lives and subsequent careers. (Marge had a very large house and rented rooms, including to N.O. policemen. She reserved a former slave quarters for a first violinist of the N.O. Symphony for the season beginning Labor Day. It was available to me without charge at all other times.) Accurate information, as I learned when I taped recorded the first conversation between these two women, beginning, alas, only after Joerg left. Turner even knew the kind of pistol Godfrey had obtained at the asylum, a make I'd not heard of before. It was a Walthers PPK. Later Marge showed it to me. The doctor never reclaimed it.

It is difficult to avoid the suspicion that Godfrey is among those who may have been used in some of the mind-bending work that has since become public - and not he alone in New Orleans and the area. I was fascinated by the voids in his recollection of his life. For one example, his knowledge of anti-Castro activity in the New Orleans area. I have some of his preparations for writing on it. (His poetry was pretty good.) He recalled none of this.

Because Turner had claimed to have known him I asked her if she would care to go to Jackson with me.

(My transportation was a Fiat sports car provided by the Fiat dealer and art fancier if not also a man of other parts, J.B.Vela. This was because I had befriended his former sales manager, Douglas Lethbridge, an authentic CIA type who was also a Bay of Pigs

prisoner. He claimed to have been a Castro government official and a boyhood neighbor of Castro's. When I phoned Lethbridge to ask for a cheap rental car, not knowing of his mental illness, Vela remembered me and would not accept payment for the use of the Fiat. This was very helpful, considering that in those 15 days I had only four real meals, on other days being able to afford only a skim milk and vitamins breakfast and a 19¢ hamburger for supper.)

Just before lunch time Godfrey told me lunch time was approaching, that after lunch they were required to rest, and not to return until that period was over. I asked him if I could bring him anything. His response was that he'd like a malt. Turner interjected chocolate. The mother later told me that from boyhood malted milkshakes were a virtual addiction with him - and only chocolate.

Godfrey was homosexual but he married a prominent woman, reputedly then with child. The marriage didn't last, whether or not the mrs. Kirkpatrick's account is dependable. I spoke to the not-since-remarried wife, who happened to have been friendly with Shaw or friends of his, one of whom gave her marriage party. Godfrey's wife told me she had been interviewed by the FBI. I've seen no such reports on and no reference to or indication of any such interviews.

Garrison and his chief investigator thought I was crazy to move in with Marge and tried to talk me out of it. But they were the best accomodations I ever had in N.O., a convenient location and thanks to the CIA, even a nice sports car. Moreover, Marge was very informative. Although a bit flakey and of the ultra right and with a sign reading "Register Communists, Not Guns" at her front door. I checked out some of her information.

In the course of this I came upon a lead to Johann Rush. He had left N.O. and the people at WDSU said they'd lost track of him. In this checking I obtained the names and address and I think phone number of his parents, as I now recall, at Shreveport.

You will recall my interest in his footage and in the six prints he provided the FBI and the 17 he gave the Secret Service almost none of which are with the Commission records at the Archives.

For your better understanding of this I repeat that the FBI was looking for a third man with Oswald at the ITM, refused to provide the identification of the fingerprints not Oswald's on his literature

and in the N.O. records seeks to withhold the names of the printer and his assistant (Douglas Jones and Myra Silver.) Both are not secret. Jones died in Hurricane Camille. Before then I interviewed him twice, the second time with Mrs. Silver and on tape. Each denied that Oswald was the man who picked the printing up. Each separately selected a number of different views of a man other than Oswald (Harry Thornley) as the one who did. He was an FBI source. I told you I have a "Third Man" file. When I was able to get the Secret Service to deposit its copy of the Rush/WDSU footage at the Archives it had an identification it required much effort to get from the Archives after I saw it. The wrapper said that Oswald and two other men were shown distributing literature outside the ITN, as Jesse Core and others told me. (One of the others was the NO leader of an anti-Castro group who was service manager for the Diat agency. This man even identified an automobile he saw involved. Remember, I told you Bringuier had given the FBI a license number and the FBI withholds it still, even after Commission testimony to it?) So, I wanted to see the stills, especially because both Jesse Core and the then WDSU news director both told me the footage had been reduced by the time the FBI returned it.

When I obtained the lead to Rush through his parents and the misinformation that he had left all his film with his parents when he went to San Francisco I asked one of the New Orleans Assistant DA's to get the pix. He wanted me to go to Shreveport, for which they offered to pay. I regarded this as something they could accomplish by a phone call and refused, urging them to call first and then send an office hand.

I then left for Dallas, with a ticket privided by a former FBI SA who figures in these records but not in the N.O. files and in some of the records provided under PA, Paul Rothermel, Jr. He remained an FBI source when he became chief of security for H.L.Hunt. I had a copy of the manuscript of a spook black book he wanted. It was originally titled L'Amerique Brule, retitled by Garrison's suggestion into Farewell America. I have a full account of the leaking of this black book to Garrison. It includes persons who are mentioned in the records provided but no single reference to or indication of this is provided. One is Richard Case Nagell. Another used the name Rose and appears to have served the CIA. (If the FBI has Warren Hinckle's account it is not dependable and is self-serving. The former and disliked SA William Turner was the chief dupe, a real sucker.)

I had been away from home for a month. I was tired and unwell. The day before I was to leave Dallas Garrison phoned and insisted that I had to return to N.O. on my way home because of a major "find" or "discovery" of his. He insisted to the point where I had little choice.

My luggage managed to get lost, although that was the first stop of the plane after it left Dallas. Fortunately Herron met me and I was able to get spare clothing. The embarrassed airline provided a toilet kit. And when I finally got my luggage, it was in bad shape, as had happened before. I recall in particular the time I had made the first public use, in Minneapolis, of the picture and sketch the FBI still has not returned in the King case and immediately after I got the John Martin (Minneapolis) film no copy of which the FBI has yet provided.

When I got to N.O. late Friday night and had no luggage it was too late to see Garrison and his supposedly exciting material. I did this the next morning, Saturday, and left for home Saturday evening. The excitement was over a print of the WDSU footage. It was not a good print, a remote generation. Mine, made from the WDSU file copy at Pan-American, was much better. (As protection I'd had two prints of the footage made, desiring to have stills made from it. The copy I mailed for the stills to be made never got there. I have the other print.)

It turned out that Rush's parents had been phoned and that they had given Rush's San Francisco address and phone. Garrison or his people had phoned Bill Turner and asked him to get the stills from Rush. Instead Turner had had a poor copy made of the movie and gave it to Garrison, who was quite excited, imagining he saw Clay Shaw in it.

That day I also interviewed Charles Hall Steele, Jr., the known second man in the Oswald literature operation at the ITM. Steele then was a marine lieutenant. I have the tape. He confirmed there was a third man, not known to him. That day I also got wind of a coming Garrison insanity with which he intended to mark the 10th anniversary of the assassination and in time and with some effort was able to prevent it. That day also I initiated two independent investigations of the so-called "tramp" pictures the face of one of which is the picture that goes with the sketch in the King case. So I recall the day well enough.

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When I left N.O. I knew how to reach Rush.

Long before this I held the opinion of Turner I have since seen in FBI records. Whether or not he was as he later claimed, a "black bag" operator for the FBI, he is the one former SA of whom I know I can easily believe was fired for both incompetence and character flaws. As an investigator he is incompetent. As a writer he is a heavy-handed plagiarist who adds only error to the work of others, which is readily identifiable.

What this incompetent had not done was so simple I asked a subject expert, Paul Hoch, to interview Rush. Hoch had never interviewed anyone and was uneasy about it but he did see Rush and learned that Turner's interview consisted of boasting how great an investigator he was and not asking anything. As I recall, and I'm not digging out old records, he told Hoch that he had made no still for himself but that he had duplicated the 16 mm film before leaving WDSU.

The date of this Branigan memo (No. 74) coincides exactly with my recollection of that trip because I left Los Angeles for New Orleans on election day, having voted by absentee ballot much earlier. (Because I was in association with those on whom I know the FBI has records I'm surprised that neither the San Francisco nor Los Angeles nor San Diego nor any other field office has provided any relevant records in response to my PA requests. I made numerous appearances of the kind that have interested the FBI, even on radio and TV in Dallas, which has provided no records relating to them. Some were quite critical of the FBI's work as reflected in my C.A.75-226, which is past oral argument before the appeals court this trip for it.)

This 11/8/68 memo also reflects the existence of other relevant records not provided. If they are not in NO files as they should be they have to include San Fransciso records. If Branigan made any other record of the call from San Francisco I have not seen it in either of the FBIHQ files.

The mention earlier of the person Oswald phoned at WDSU is in his addressbook, p. 69, as Burns Rottman, 523-5033. I believe it is Vern, nor Burns. I believe that was not the WDSU number.

The addressbook is in facsimile in Commission Vol 16, Exhibit 18, pp. 37 ff.

Many interesting entries. Like micro dots on 16H53, Communist and Trotskyite names and addresses, American Nazi party leaders outside the south. The phone and license number of SA Hosty, originally withheld by the FBI on the ground that it knew Hosty, is on 64. An entry on 67 would have led Oswald to the side door of the building in which Ronnie Caire had his office at that time and where Oswald applied for a job, according to the Commission. The "David Crawford" on this page is actually David Chandler, who confirmed it to me. These minor deviations characterize Oswald's entries.

To go back to the withholding relating to Pan-American Films, if there was a legitimacy to any claim of a confidential source then the FBI should have known that I had had copies of the movie made there. Someone also just might have had reason to be interested in my mailing of a package that looked like it could hold a roll of film. A source at WDSU or inside a narrow area of the Garrison office, the small one in which Comstock was, could have known. Or the disappearance in the mail could have been accidental

In any event, unlike many of my appeals, which are in the interest of the historical record and of no personal interest to me in my work, this entire matter is of both characters, important in my work from the first and to a complete and accurate historical record.

My intent to restrict myself to the responsible and non-conjectural in this area changed all that followed a decision I had to make in early 1966. After sitting on the manuscript of my first book for months a major publisher wrote me that if I would do some rewriting around what begins on page 138 line 4 it would be an extraordinarily important work they would be glad to publish. Doing this required that I charge the Government with conspiracy. I was not prepared to do that for wealth or fame and instead at that point decided to bring the book out myself, the first book, which then existed in a limited and copyrighted edition.

In connection with that citation I also had written that Oswald's career in New Orleans was consistent with what in intelligence is called establishing a cover.

Part of this establishing of a cover was his literature and related operations and the attention he was able to draw to them. The official investigation and the records I've been provided do not include most of his known operations and no basis for such entries

in the addressbook as Rottman of all the people at WDSU (incidently, the right one and not one who appeared on the tube) and Chandler at the newspaper.

I have turned up many other such picketings by Oswald, all designed to attract the attention of the Bringuiers and others of that anti-Castro bent. My sources included the FBI's sources, but the FBI's records do not include what they told me. If the information remained in New Orleans it is not in the records provided. If the FBI ignored it that would appear to be quite unusual, there was that much of it. It was all in the same general area, near Bringuier's place. There was no one more certain to rise to that bait than El Estupides Bringuier.

Not long after Oswald got this attention and the proofs of it to take with him he was off for Mexico and the mysteries about it that the FBI and CIA perpetuate by their withholdings under "national security" claim. (There has been no response to my appeals

A tragic event not in the files relates to one Brian Ampolsk, of whom there is scant mention. Shortly after his experience with Oswald he was sent to an assylum. His father told me he was just out of it about the time of the Branigan memo so even though I knew where Brian was and was working I did not seek to interview him. The father connected his flipping out and his Oswald experience.

The FBI's failure to make unequivocal response, that it does not have copies of the Doyle and (John) Martin (Minneapolis) films of Oswald being arrested in New Orleans during the incident he provoked with Bringuier while providing copies of records stating what can't be believed, that there was no interest in these films, plus its failure to offer the films to the Commission or even inform it of Martin and his film, all are relevant and tend to suggest motive for withholding. My Doyle and Martin requests are more than a decade old.

Any new view of Oswald, which is in the Martin film, and any possibility of an associate, which can be in both films, obviously had some value. Considering all the filed junk and all the pursuit of insane stuff by the FBI ignoring any photographs of or relating to Oswald is suspect, if they were ignored.

With Rush an FBI informant this becomes much more provocative. I believe the entire matter should be researched, without limit to the Oswald and assassination file designa-

tions. It should include 134 files, 80 and 67 and any other possible Orwellian number or caption.

What makes this even more provocative is checking the worksheets covering the other file, 62-109060, for that copy of this Branigan memo. That time period is included in Section 163. It begins with 9/26/68, the next Section with 11/25/68. There is but a single entry for the date 11/8/68, and conveniently it is for a Branigan to Sullivan memo of a single page. Only in this file 62-109060, it is withheld entirely under 7D claim.

Assuming the obvious, the withholding is 100% unjustified and 100% unjustifiable.

Assuming what else is obvious, this is not an accident but is deliberate withholding of what can be embarrassing to the FBI.

If the FOIA processors were without subject matter knowledge and if they did not exercise due diligence and did not process in good faith the most examination of the record itself discloses then could have been withheld is that Rush was an informant. There is reasonably segregable information and it is relevant.

There is much junk made available by the FBI about Oswald in New Orleans and there is much that this junk covers up, what is not junk that the FBI has not disclosed about his career there. A major part relates to his manufacture of a pro-Castro record, part of which is this getting of public attention, which is consistent with establishing a cover and nothing else.

A major search remains to be made, and not limited to the NO FO records not searched.

In FBIHQ there are many Branigan to Sullivan memos relating to this part of Oswald's career. Any coming from my FOIA requests I saw so long ago I do not recall them. However, recently I made copies of quite a stack of them relating to Hoch's and sent them to him. (At the time of his initial requests he was still in graduate school.)

If you wonder about the 134 number it appears in this Branigan memo below the list of the names of those to whom copies were sent and to whose files search should be extended: 134-17762

With Rush and informant at the least there should be his report on the Oswald operation and his footage of it.

It is my recollection that after he shot the film Rush had lunch with one of those appearing in his film, the previously mentioned Neeley.

She worked with the previously mentioned Core, who was quite upset over what Oswald had done, believing it reflected badly on the ITM.

Whether or not she did, Neeley could have provided the account available from Core and not in any records I've seen.

What I've referred to as the least may be that. Only a real search, with due diligence in looking for out-of-the-way filing, can determine.

There is also what else Rush may have said in San Francisco, whether or not it may be elsewhere at FBIHQ. I believe it should be provided as part of the historical record.